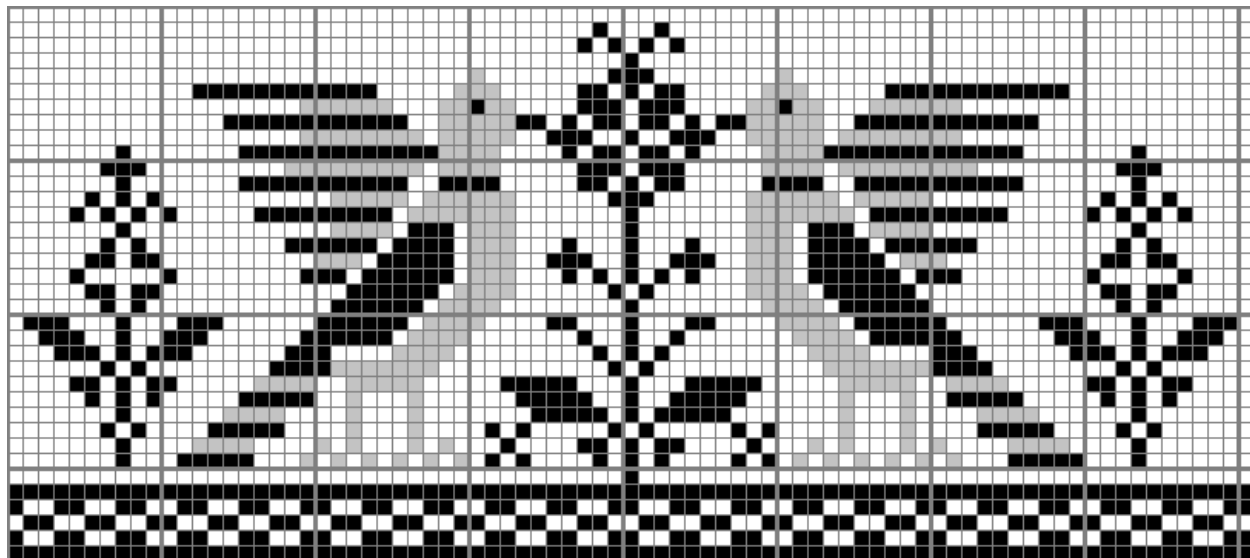


Revival of Bead Craze in Portland, 1904



Adapted from
Marion Mac Rae.
The Sunday Oregonian, Portland, February 28, 1904.

Helen Hough (Editor)

James G. Collins & Associates
2022

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From the original work by Marion Mac Rae
from issues of the *The Sunday Oregonian*, Portland, February 28, 1904.

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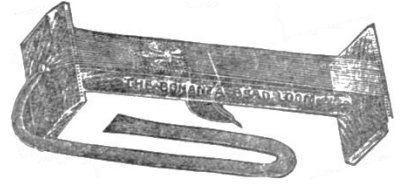
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Revival of Bead Craze in Portland

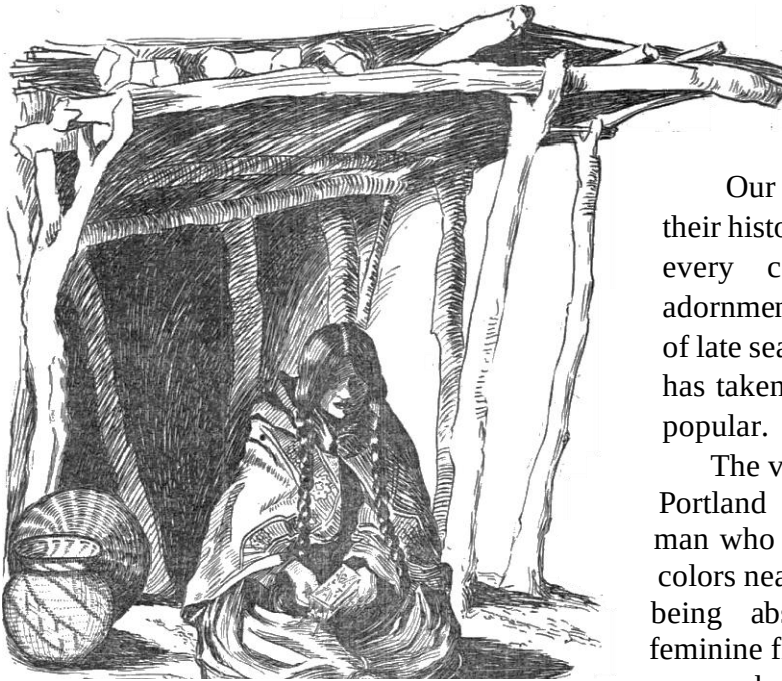
This Form of Fancy Work Used for Men's Wear Ornaments as Well as Women's

There has been a remarkable revival of the bead craze In Portland since Christmas, and there is scarcely a borne in the city where fancywork has a place that some dainty conceit made of tiny Indian beads may not be found. Miniature looms are seen in my lady's boudoir, in her den, or by her favorite window seat. Her work basket contains bunches and strings of gay colored beads, which her nimble fingers weave in and out. In and out, among the threads, until some quaint old-fashioned design is worked out on a cardcase, a belt or a wrist bag.

Bead Loom



Those who can turn the leaves of memory back to the days when every grand dame carried a bead purse, wondrous of color and design, may feel, when they see the great array of useful articles which are now fashioned of beads, that they are living again in other days, for beadwork is a craft of the past resurrected.



Home of the Original Bead Worker

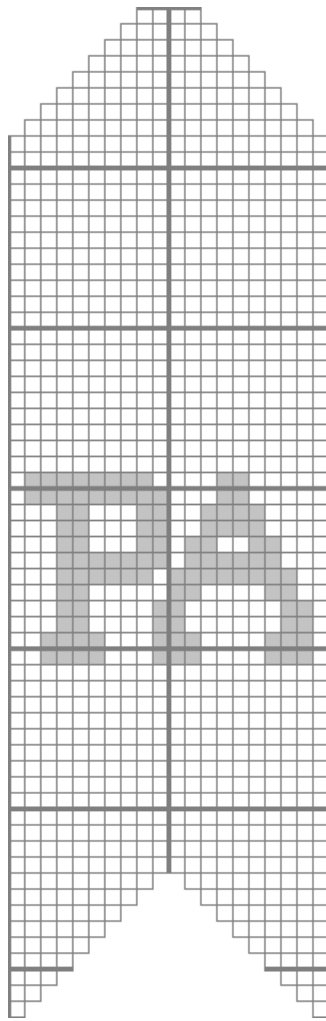
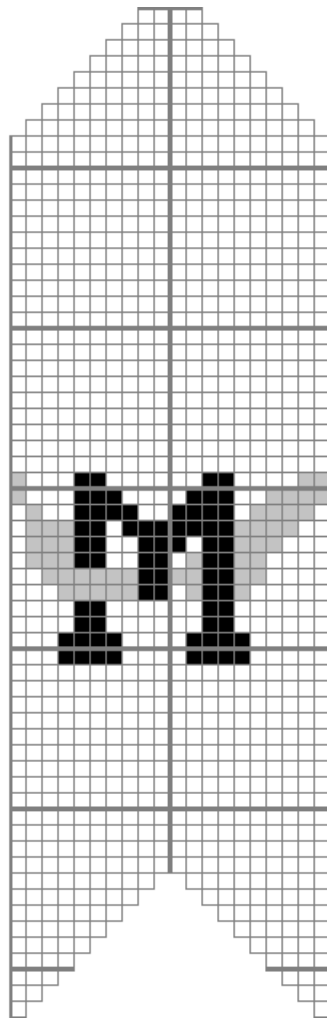
boys and the pupils of the high school are proud possessors of insignia woven in beadwork showing their favorite colors. An Indian parlor in a local hotel is often crowded after school hours by girl students who eagerly select their own special "frat colors." This parlor carries the shades which the schools all use, as well as Multnomah red and the Elk purple. Multnomah badges make up vary pretty, but the customers who come in for these are not schoolgirls -- a little older, if you please real young ladies. Designs and patterns are to be had for the Masons, Oddfellows, Knight Templars, Knights of Pythias, Elks, Ancient Order of Hibernians, Royal Arcanum, Christian Endeavor, Epworth League and many others. And they are not merely displayed -- they are being purchased and worked up by the dozens, and the men have to wear them whether they like them or not -- which is a question.

For many centuries past beadwork had been considered an important branch of needle craft among crowned heads.

Our American Indians record much of their history in its handicraft and used it for every conceivable form of personal adornment and admired them, but it is only of late seasons that the maker of fancywork has taken up the art and made it so vastly popular.

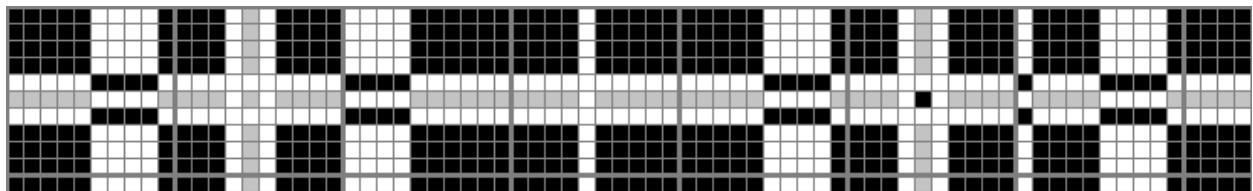
The very latest fad in beadwork here in Portland is the fraternity badge, and the man who cannot support his lodge or club colors neatly woven into a fob is marked as being absolutely destitute of admiring feminine friends. Especially among the

school frats has this become popular, and the Portland Academy, the B. S. A.

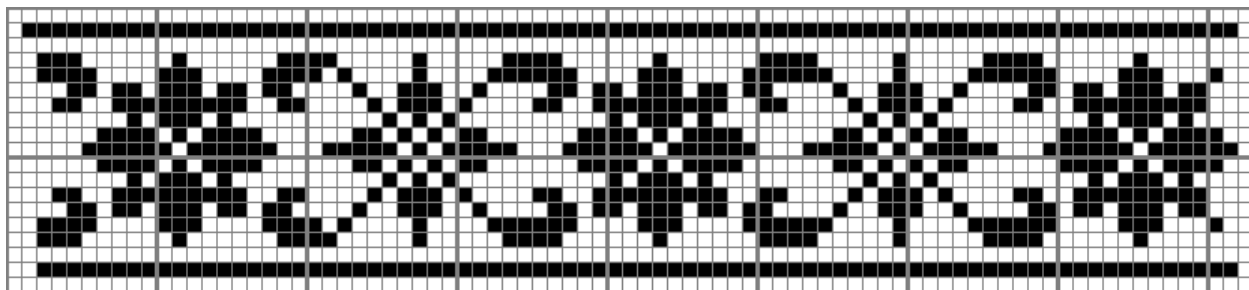
Portland Academy**Multnomah**

It soon becomes the ambition of a beadworker who has made belts and chains to attempt a large piece -- a cardcase, wristbag, purse or chatelaine. The very old-fashioned bags were knit after the beads had been strung, yards and yards at a time. This was an arduous way of making them. for the miscount of just one bead would throw the entire pattern out or gear when it came to knitting the strands. The use of the little loom now does away with the tedious part of the work, and these pieces can be constructed in a few days where it used to take many weeks of patient labor. It is always desirable in making the cardcases or chatelaines to select a very old-fashioned design, as much like grandmother's as as possible. The design for a wristbag given here with the church, trees and flowers is copied from a bag carried by a maiden of fashion in the days of Martha Washington, and gives a good idea of the designs then in favor. Remember that they were not then selected because they were old-fashioned, but because our grandmothers thought they were pretty and admired them. In making such bag they should be lined with silk or

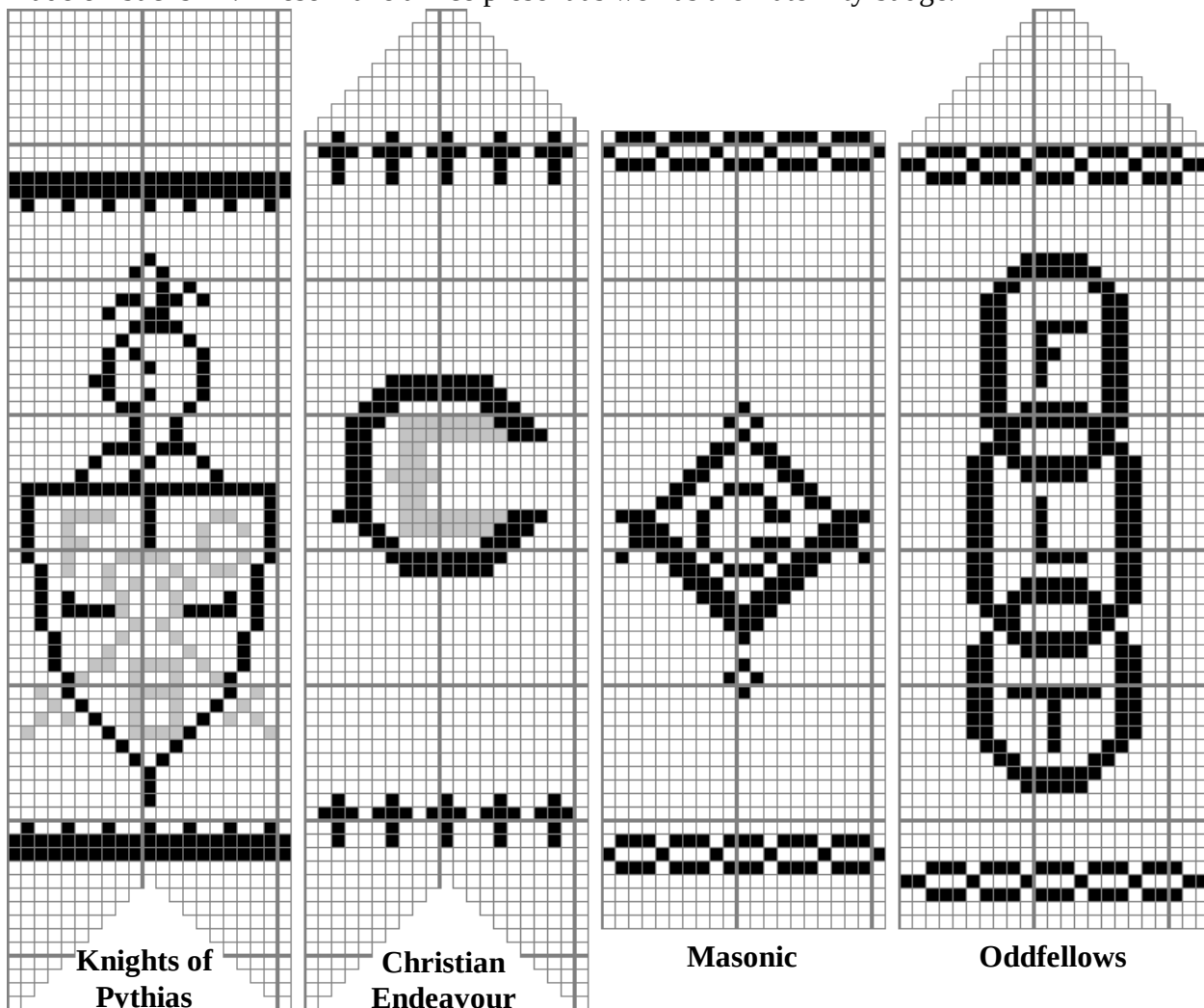
leather to prevent too much strain or wear on the beadwork. Aside from the set piece and animal designs for bags, there are many quaint floral designs to be had, which admit many varied color combinations. A poppy design on a rich black background was noticed on the cardcase on one of the season's debutantes in church last Wednesday, and in the same congregation a fashionable matron carried a wristbag of white with violets scattered over it. The wild rose is probably as pretty as any of the floral effects, and set pieces are prettier than any of them.



Bracelets and collars are much fancied by young- folks, especially school girls. The collar is woven just like the bolt is, the edges bound with ribbon, on which fasteners are tacked and the front is ornamented with fringe forming a long point over the chest. These are very pretty when chosen with care. Cut-steel beads on a black background make a striking effect, especially when the pattern is simple, such as the bowknot or Grecian border designs.

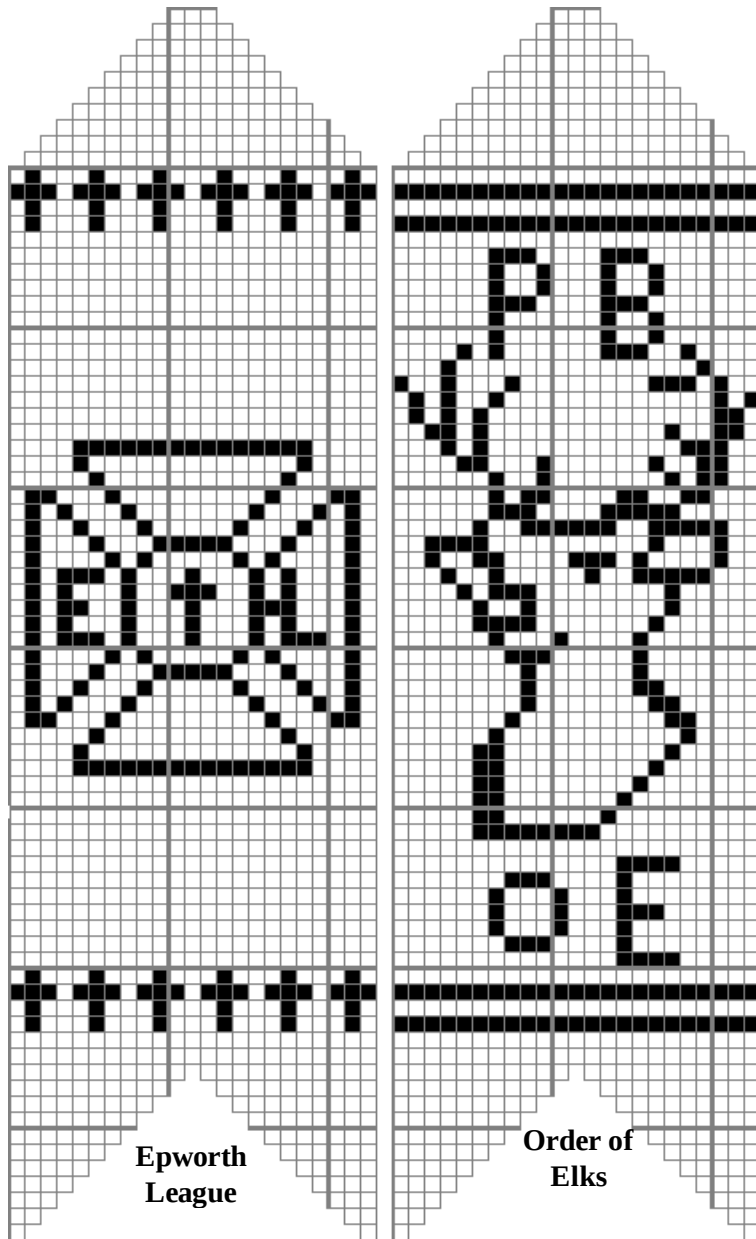
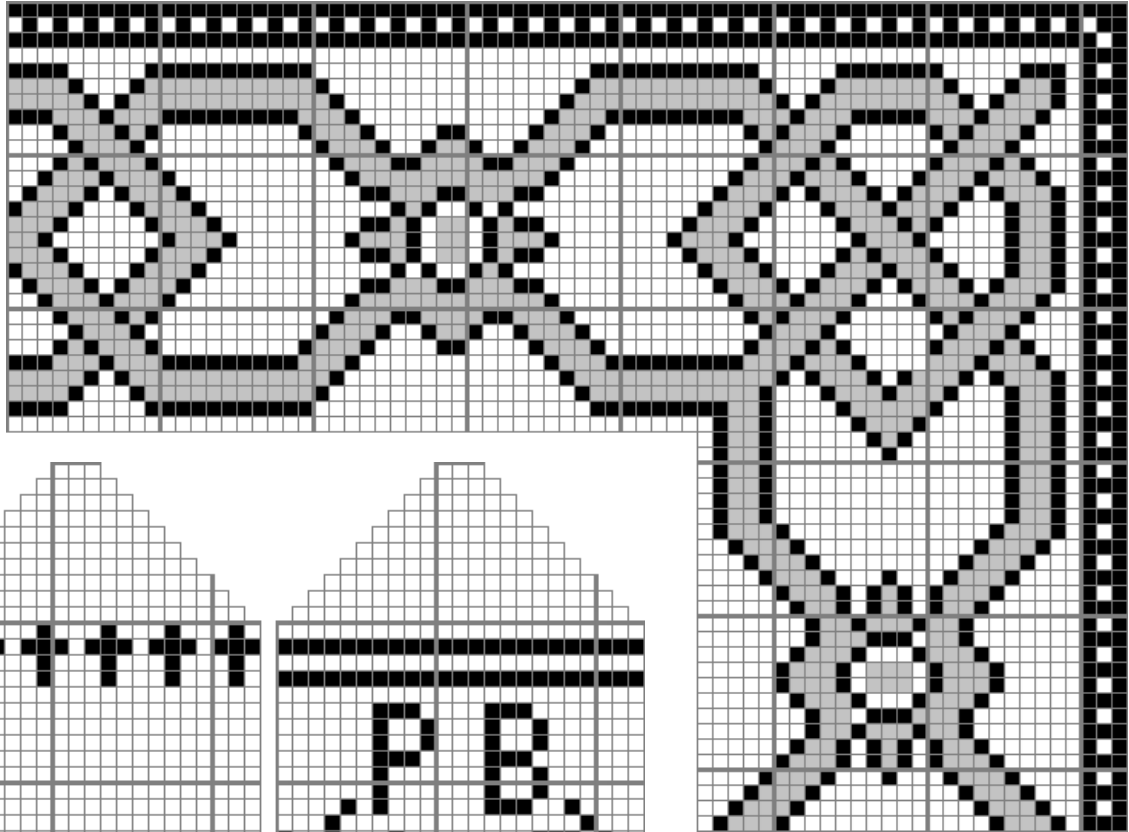


The long sampler chains which are worn around the neck are not new but they retain their popularity, and many are now under construction. Tobacco pouches come in pretty conceits, made on buckskin. These make a nice present as well as the fraternity badge.



Beads From Barbarous Tribes

There is such a bewildering array of colors and shades in the new stocks of beads which are being- displayed on every hand that it is not difficult for anyone to make up any design that may be conceived. The introduction of the loom has made the work comparatively simple. Of greens alone not less than five shades were noticed in one Indian parlor, and the yellows, silver, blues, reds, purples, golds, -steel and black were there in every conceivable shade or tone.



**Epworth
League**

**Order of
Elks**

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Jeweled beads for decorating lace collars and fancy work are good sellers, and there is a variety for the little kindergarteners, too. They are considered very instructive, especially when the children work out their own designs. One dealer has

some "fathoms" of beads which the mother of Chief Skake. of the Thlinket tribe, bought from the Hudson Bay Company about 60 years ago. Some of them are small red ones and others are large blue glass, and all are strung on reindeer sinew -- there being no thread available for the purpose in those days. Black-eyed Susan beads from Honolulu come in 100-yard lengths, and are hardened berries, red with a small black tip. They are strung while green, as they get too hard to penetrate with a needle after being dried. They are used to drape the ceilings of dens, forming graceful festoons when hung about. Tasmanian beads are another of the late ideas In this kind of ornamentation. They come in beautiful iridescent tints, and are tiny sea shells. There is an insect grows in each and if strung before this insect dies the shells keep their beautiful luster. These are also worn about the neck.

Marion Mac Rae. *The Sunday Oregonian*, Portland, February 28, 1904.

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